

REMARKS

In the Office Action¹, the Examiner took the following actions:

rejected claims 1, 7, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Takaki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,686,850², "*Takaki*");

rejected claims 2-6, 14, 17, and 19-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Takaki*; and

objected to claims 8-13, 15, and 16 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant amends claims 1-7, and 9-23, and cancels claim 8. Thus, claims 1-7 and 9-23 are pending and under current examination.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 1, 7, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Takaki*. Nevertheless, in order to further advance prosecution, Applicant amends independent claims 1, 7, and 18 to include the subject matter indicated by the Examiner as allowable.

Accordingly, all pending claims recite allowable subject matter.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

¹ The Office Action contains statements characterizing the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statements are specifically identified herein, Applicant declines to automatically subscribe to any statements in the Office Action.

² During a telephone interview, the Examiner noted that the Office Action erroneously listed the patent number as "5,686,650" (p.2), and that the correct number is "5,686,850."

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

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By: /Jia W. Lu/
Jia W. Lu
Reg. No. 61,543
(202) 408-4000